



Key facts about higher education in Washington

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Introduction

This publication, “Key facts about higher education in Washington,” brings together much of the information one might need to understand and discuss higher education issues.

While this publication does not attempt to answer every question that may come up in discussions about higher education, it highlights the most often-asked questions about institutions, faculty, students, costs, budgets, financial aid, and other topics.

First published in 2002, “Key facts about higher education in Washington” is updated annually by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). Additional information about higher education is available through the agency’s Web site: www.hecb.wa.gov.

Other Web sites contain useful information on different aspects of higher education and many of these sites are listed throughout the booklet as resources.

HECB responsibilities

The Higher Education Coordinating Board is a 10-member citizen board that administers the state’s student financial aid programs and provides planning, coordination, monitoring, and policy analysis for higher education in Washington.

The board is charged by law with representing the “broad public interest above the interests of the individual colleges and universities.”

Created by the Legislature in 1985, the HECB was formally established in January 1986 as the successor to the Council for Postsecondary Education. Board members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the state Senate. They serve four-year terms, with the exception of the student member, who serves one year. Beginning in January 2006, the members of the board will select one of their colleagues as the chair. The agency’s executive director serves at the pleasure of the board.

Major functions of the board include:

- Administering state financial aid programs
- Helping families save for college
- Motivating young people to go to college
- Preparing a strategic plan for higher education
- Recommending budget priorities and policy changes
- Approving degree programs
- Ensuring program quality
- Establishing minimum freshmen admission requirements at public four-year colleges and universities